



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

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### MEDIA FACT SHEET

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## Census: one in eight Australians lives alone

### Lone-person and group households

- Around one in every eight Australians who lived in a private dwelling lived alone (12% or 1.8 million people), according to the 2006 Census results. One-person households represented about 23% of all households in Australia. Adults who lived alone were on average older than adults who lived in other households – the median age of an adult living in a one-person household was 56 years, compared to a median age of 43 years for adults living in all types of household. This is consistent with many of these householders being older people living alone after the death of their spouse or partner.
- Just over one quarter of all households in Adelaide (27%) and Hobart (26%) were one-person households, a higher proportion than in other capital cities. The older age profiles of these cities will have contributed to these higher proportions.
- There were just under 281,000 group households\* in Australia, or 4% of all households. Around 4% of Australians over the age of 15 lived in group households. Group household members tended to be young on average – the median age of an adult living in a group household was 28 years.

### Unpartnered people\*\*

- In 2006, around 4.6 million people aged 20 years and over in Australia were unpartnered – they were not living with a partner or a spouse. Just under 55% of unpartnered people had never been married, and the remaining 45% had been previously married and since divorced, separated or widowed, or were living separately from their marriage partner. A substantially higher proportion of unpartnered women (55%) had been separated, divorced or widowed, or were living separately, compared to unpartnered men (33%).
- There were six unpartnered men who had never been married for every five unpartnered women never married.
- Unpartnered people who had previously been married or were living separately were more likely than those unpartnered people who had never been married to be a lone parent (29% and 8% respectively) or live in a lone-person household (52% and 27% respectively). Unpartnered people who have never been married were more likely to live in a family household (49%), including young people living with their parents.

\* The definition of a group household is: a household consisting of 2 or more unrelated people where all people are over the age of 15. There are no reported couple, parent/child or other blood

relationships in these households.

\*\* Unpartnered people are persons over 20 years who did not state that they were living with husband/wife, or did not state that they were living in a defacto relationship.

NB: The figures in this fact sheet exclude overseas visitors. Where an answer to a question has not been provided (i.e. not stated) these occurrences form a separate category in the data and therefore some percentages do not total to 100%.

Source: ABS 2006 Census.

**Table 1. One-person and group households, occupied private dwellings, 1996 Census - 2006 Census**

	2006		1996		Change 1996-2006	
	('000)	%	('000)	%	('000)	%
One-person household	1 740.5	22.9	1 432.8	22.1	307.7	21.5
Group household	280.9	3.7	266.0	4.1	14.8	5.6
Total occupied private dwellings(a)	7 596.2		6 496.1		1 100.1	16.9

(a) Total occupied private dwellings includes other household types not listed.

**Table 2. One-person and group households, persons aged 15 years and over, 1996 Census - 2006 Census**

	Median age of persons	2006		1996		Change 1996-2006	
		('000)	%	('000)	%	('000)	%
One-person household	56	1 833.5	11.5	1 513.0	10.9	320.6	21.2
Group household	28	632.0	4.0	627.5	4.5	4.5	0.7
Total population(a)	43	15 918.1		13 914.9		2 003.2	14.4

(a) Total occupied private dwellings includes other household types not listed.

**Table 3. 2006 Census: One-person and group households, % of all occupied private dwellings, capital city(a)**

	Sydney %	Melbourne %	Brisbane %	Adelaide %	Perth %	Hobart %	Darwin %	Canberra %
One-person households	21.6	22.6	21.2	27.1	23.6	26.4	19.5	22.1
Group households	3.9	4.2	4.8	3.5	3.6	3.7	5.1	5.1

(a) Capital City Statistical Division.

**Table 4. 2006 Census: Unpartnered persons(a), by registered marital status**

	Male		Female		Persons	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
never married	1 391.4	66.8	1 127.2	44.9	2 518.7	54.8
widowed, divorced, separated	690.6	33.2	1 385.1	55.1	2 075.7	45.2

Total unpartnered persons	2 082.1	100.0	2 512.3	100.0	4 594.4	100.0
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(a) Unpartnered people are persons over 20 years who did not state that they were living with husband/wife, or did not state that they were living in a defacto relationship. Therefore, the 'widowed, divorced or separated' category includes people who may have been married but were living separately. Where a persons social and/or registered marital status was unknown they were excluded from this category.

**Table 5. 2006 Census: Living arrangements and age of unpartnered persons(a)**

		Lone parent	Related or unrelated person in family household	Group household member	Lone person	Total
		%	%	%	%	%
Marital status						
	widowed, divorced, separated	29.3	12.3	6.0	52.4	100.0
	never married	8.2	48.6	16.7	26.5	100.0
Age						
	20-34 years	9.0	56.3	18.8	15.9	100.0
	35-64 years	29.5	17.8	8.6	44.0	100.0
	65 years and over	11.7	12.1	4.2	72.0	100.0

(a) Unpartnered people are persons over 20 years who did not state that they were living with husband/wife, or did not state that they were living in a defacto relationship. Therefore, the 'widowed, divorced or separated' category includes people who may have been married but were living separately. Where a persons social and/or registered marital status was unknown they were excluded from this category.

**Table 6. 2006 Census: Number and proportion of students aged 15-34 years, by living arrangement**

	15-24 years		25-34 years		Total	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Group household member	99.4	48.4	39.0	21.8	138.5	70.2
Other living arrangements	1 293.4	51.8	259.3	10.4	1 552.7	62.1
Total	1 392.9	51.5	298.3	11.1	1 691.2	62.7

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